S. A. 1103
2203 W. 6.

*The Christian Pattern of doing good.*

A

# SERMON

PREACHED IN THE

OLD CHURCH, AT LIVERPOOL,

MAY 8, 1782,

ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE

# INFIRMARY

ESTABLISHED IN THAT TOWN.

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BY EDWARD OWEN, M. A.
RECTOR OF WARRINGTON.

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*Printed by the Desire of the Trustees, and for the Benefit of the Charity.*

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WARRINGTON,
PRINTED BY WILLIAM EYRES.
MDCCLXXXII.

1760

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE

# TRUSTEES

AND OTHER FRIENDS AND ENCOURAGERS

OF THE

# INFIRMARY

ESTABLISHED AT LIVERPOOL.

THE wiſh, expreſſed by a well-diſpoſed and judicious part of the audience, that the following Sermon were diſperſed more widely by means of the preſs, was a motive of too flattering a nature, to be reſiſted by me; and if it be in any degree proportioned to the importance of the Charity, to the eſteem I owe your worthy Treaſurer of the expiring year (whoſe preſſing ſolicitation drew me out of the obſcurity in which I wiſhed to cloſe my days,) and to the high opinion which I entertain of the liberal,

indeed of the great and magnificent ſpirit of your town, I ſhall be exceedingly happy. Unhappy, however, I cannot be, whatever be my ſucceſs, in the conſciouſneſs of ſincerely intending well, and in this public opportunity of declaring myſelf,

GENTLEMEN,

Your reſpectful humble Servant,

WARRINGTON,
*May* 22, 1782.

E. OWEN.

A

# CHARITY SERMON, &c.

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ACTS x. 38.

*God anointed Jeſus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghoſt and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppreſſed of the devil; for God was with him.*

THE diſtreſſes of the poor ariſe ſo neceſſarily from that chain of ſubordination, on which the general happineſs of ſociety depends; that they may be really conſidered as a kind of *martyrs* and *ſufferers* in the public ſervice; and this forms their *natural* right to the aſſiſtance of the higher orders.

THIS being premiſed (for I ſtay not at preſent to prove the point, having conſidered it

before upon a former occaſion in this place*) it will be now both pleaſing and inſtructing to obſerve, how the goſpel agrees with, and improves upon nature, in the example and precepts of our Saviour; *who* (as the text ſays) *went about doing good, and healing all that were afflicted of the devil,* i. e. removing human miſeries, the effects of the fall, by the power and beneficence of his miracles.

I. For his miracles were both works of *power*, and works of *mercy*. In the firſt view, they command our *belief*; in the ſecond, our *imitation*. It is his own expreſs moral to that parable of mercy, the good Samaritan; *go thou and do likewiſe*. He therefore, who came to be our example as well as ſacrifice, muſt ſpeak the ſame language in his own works of mercy; *go thou and do likewiſe*.

* In the Infirmary Sermon preached and publiſhed in 1765; which I ſhould not have preſumed to refer to, had it not been honoured with the approbation of very able judges, particularly of the learned and ingenious Dr. Smith, Dean of Cheſter, when it was firſt preached; and of my candid and worthy neighbour Dr. Enfield, who has ſince thought it worthy of a place in the collection of ſermons which he has ſelected and abridged from various authors, under the title of the *Engliſh Preacher*.

" Go,

" Go, (he ſays,) and improve by what I do.
" —I go about doing works which no man
" could do if God were not with him: go and
" revere my authority. I go about as a
" teacher ſent from God: go and obey my
" precepts. I go about as a heaven-ſent ex-
" ample to a corrupt world: go and ſeek hea-
" ven in my unerring ſteps. I go about doing
" good: go and obey both my precepts and
" example. I do good by miracle: imitate
" me according to the meaſure of thy abilities.
" I came in poverty, a meek patient ſufferer;
" for ſo the ſalvation of man required: reſpect
" poverty, and turn not away thy face from
" any poor man. I give liberally in my po-
" verty: give thou at leaſt out of thy abun-
" dance. I give, with unwearied diligence,
" my time, my labour, and my life itſelf for
" man: give thou as thy conveniences, at leaſt,
" permit. I act upon the ſoft inſtinct of com-
" paſſion: do thou cultivate that amiable temper
" of the heart, and be thou compaſſionate and
" merciful after thy power. I pity man as
" an afflicted creature: pity thou him as thy
" fellow-creature, thy aſſociate in nature and
" affliction. I do good at the will of my Fa-
" ther who is in heaven: let obedience to God
" and the love of man be thy motive *to do*
" *likewiſe.*

" *likewiſe.* I ſeek not glory in my works: " love not thou the praiſe of men more than " the praiſe of God; *and do likewiſe.* I extend " my mercies to all, without diſtinction of " ſect or party: let thy mercy be without par- " tiality; *and do thou likewiſe.* I relieve all " evils both of mind and body: think thou " no evil incident to man, foreign to thyſelf; " *and do thou likewiſe.* Though my miracles " are principally deſigned to prove my divine " miſſion, yet are they works of mercy, to prove " mercy an eminent part of my religion: *go* " *thou and do likewiſe* according to thy abilities, " if thou wilt be my diſciple indeed, and a " child of the Moſt High."

II. NOTHING can be more plain, than that the miracles of our Saviour were works of mercy as well as proofs of his divine miſſion by their omnipotence. Even the two, which, to a careleſs eye, have a contrary aſpect, the deſtruction of the herd of ſwine in the ſea, and the blaſted fig-tree, yet were acts of *correction* and *admonition*; which in certain circumſtances are real mercies. For the Gadarenes were guilty of a profane violation of their law in feeding ſwine for the food and ſacrifices of their heathen neighbours; and the Jews, like the fig-

fig-tree,* which was barren in its proper ſeaſon of fruit, were impenitent under the higheſt means of grace, and were here in this emblem warned of their approaching deſtruction unleſs they averted it by repentance. Correction and

* WHAT is read Mark xi. 13, *the time of figs was not yet*, means *the time of* GATHERING FIGS *was not come.* This incident was *three days* before the paſſover. And as the Jews were required by their law to offer their *firſt fruits* on the morrow of the ſabbath immediately *following* the *paſſover*, and were not allowed to gather any of their fruits *before*; theſe words imply a reaſon why our Saviour might have expected fruit upon the tree. The whole verſe ſhould be thus read with a parentheſis: *And ſeeing a fig-tree afar off having leaves, he came if haply he might find any thing thereon (and when he came to it he found nothing but leaves,) for the time of gathering figs was not yet.* Kidder's Demonſtration of the Meſſiah, part II. p. 38. Pearce's Miracles of Jeſus, Vind. part III. p. 40.

WE need not be ſurpriſed, that the word of God requires care and humility, and other teachable diſpoſitions, to be well underſtood. That other work of God, the *book* of *nature*, muſt be ſtudied in the ſame manner, to teach us the firſt elements of natural religion. Both are harmonious and awful ſyſtems to the ſerious and contemplative. The great misfortune of man is inconſideration. The ſame ſuperficial view of things, which (as Lord Bacon obſerves) makes the Atheiſt, makes alſo the Deiſt of our times.

admonition,

admonition, on proper occaſions, are the higheſt exerciſe of mercy both in God's moral providence and every wiſe government conducted by man; and our Saviour gives them in this place the ſanction of his authority. Thus all his miracles, as I ſaid, were examples of beneficence!

And what an expreſſive language do they utter to all his diſciples! What a leſſon is it to our humanity, that there was not a want of *body* or *mind*, which he did not honour with his compaſſion!—*He went about doing good!* The Saviour, the Inſtructor of the world went about doing good!—Can any one profeſs belief in his name, and expect ſalvation by his merits, and yet ſit down unactive in this ſcene of trial, neither doing nor intending good! Can any one value himſelf upon other tempers and other purſuits, upon purſuits and tempers even miſchievous to human life; when his Maſter's favourite purpoſe was to benefit afflicted man!

He had his tears for every ſorrow; his pity for every diſtreſs. And can it be your pride to harden your heart againſt human afflictions? He denied himſelf his neceſſary refreſhments

of

of food and ſleep in doing good! And will you ſacrifice no conſiderations of intereſt or eaſe to ſo generous, ſo divine a pleaſure? He felt no evils, but what he voluntarily ſtooped to, with gracious humility, for our ſakes! And will you not feel for evils, which are natural to your own condition; your own deſtined portion, in ſome form or other, before you quit this ſcene of change and miſery?

III. While our Saviour's miracles teach us mercy in this direct and inſtructive manner, it is remarkable that they remove, at the ſame time, the principal objections againſt it.

For what can be ſaid? Will you ſay,* with the unbeliever, that miracles are *obſolete* events, done in a *diſtant* age and diſtant *corner* of the earth; and that, coming down to us only by

* The firſt objection and anſwer were omitted in the preaching, as being thought unneceſſary for a well-diſpoſed congregation; but are now publiſhed not only as an uſeful part of the plan, but as a neceſſary antidote, in a looſe unthinking and *therefore* incredulous age, to whoſe corrupt taſte the unhappy author of the objection, the ſceptical Mr. Hume, has proſtituted ſuch great and ſhining talents as ſhould have been better employed.

the

the medium of *teſtimony*, and *no objects of our experience*, we are not obliged to believe them, or to be influenced by them?—Take care: miracles are events of too awful an air and too important a moment, to be paſſed over with profane gaiety or thoughtleſs indifference.

ATTEND only to ſuch accounts as theſe, laying aſide the other evidences of religion: Jeſus ſaid to the ſea, *be ſtill—and there was a calm*; to diſeaſe, *be clean—and the leper was made whole from that very hour*; to infirmity, *riſe and walk—and the cripple aroſe in all the ſtrength of manly vigour, and walked home in peace*;—and do you not obſerve the ſame marks of divine omnipotence in theſe accounts, as appear in the acknowledged ſublimity of the hiſtory of creation, acknowledged even by a heathen critic;* *let there be light—and there was light?* And does not the ſame power appear equally viſible in both tranſactions, the *creation* and *redemption*; and prove them both of equal truth and importance?

"AY, but we have never ſeen theſe miracles "(it is ſaid) they come down to us only by the "medium of teſtimony, which is never cre-

* LONGINUS.

"dited

"dited againſt experience." Alas! *perſonal* experience, how partial is it, how confined! Allow God to be but a *moral* not a *neceſſary* Agent (and not to allow this is the height of atheiſtical folly, when we ourſelves, his *creatures*, are moral agents;) and we ſhall ſoon acknowledge the dignity of his interpoſition on *great* occaſions, without taking away the uſe of a well-improved experience, that neceſſary preſervative againſt deception, in the *ordinary* courſe of his providence. Have we any experience of a created world? Yet it muſt have had a divine beginning. Have we any experience of an univerſal wreck by an overwhelming deluge? Yet the traces of the general deluge are to be found in every climate of the earth. Have we ſeen any thing even analogous to the growth of the Roman Empire, ſpringing up from a few fugitives, formed into a ſmall community amidſt great and potent ſtates, yet with handfuls of men ſubduing thouſands, and, in a long ſeries of unexampled ſucceſs, conquering ſuperior ſtate after ſtate, and kingdom after kingdom, until it occupied the beſt part of the habitable earth? Yet the traces of it, remaining at this day, prove the truth of its hiſtory and the extent of its dominion. And will you, then, be ſo unreaſonable as to judge

of

of the miracles, that delivered the Jews out of Egypt and ſettled them in the land of Canaan, by the partial ſtandard of your experience; when this is expreſsly ſaid to be the work of God upon an important occaſion, and when the poſterity of that people, and the various ſcenes of action ſtill remain to evince the truth of their early hiſtory? Much more, will you diſbelieve the ſtill more indiſputable miracles of Chriſt and his Apoſtles; when his religion, which could not be founded but upon the ſuppoſition of ſuch miracles, is this day in full exiſtence before your eyes? when thoſe miracles are *authentickly* recorded as facts; and when facts, *once* done, are *always* true; and, once *recorded*, continue always true to all generations?

Heaven knows, we ſee but little with *our own* eyes, even in common life: moſt of our uſeful knowledge comes by ſeeing with *other people*'s eyes, i. e. by credible teſtimony. Why cannot God require us to act upon the ſame grounds in religion? The civil powers above us are as *inviſible* to moſt of us, as the God whom we ought to obey; and yet we yield, almoſt upon teſtimony, with patient and uſeful ſubmiſſion, to their authority. We believe there are many diſtant places, which we never

ſaw;

ſaw; and yet theſe we can *viſit* or *traffic* to upon teſtimony, without the fear of *any* diſappointment at the end of our fatigue or riſque, but what is natural to travelling or trade. Theſe diſtant places have *qualities* and *productions* totally different from what we have ever ſeen or known, i. e. even *contrary to our experience*; and yet, upon the teſtimony of our fellow-creatures, we have no doubts of their exiſtence. If, then, religion requires your faith and obedience upon at leaſt as good grounds; if it tells you of an inviſible world and inviſible things upon at leaſt as good teſtimony; take care that infidelity be not your condemnation. Yes, the æra of miracles and their intermiſſions, may be as neceſſary a part of God's moral providence as winter and ſummer in the ſhorter revolutions of his natural providence; and the inviſible ſcene of things revealed in the goſpel as real in the further progreſſion of our being, as what we now ſee in our preſent ſtage!

"But allowing a providence, you will ſay, "does it not belong to God to provide for the "creatures whom he brings into being?" No: he acts by *inſtruments* in this buſy ſcene, though the firſt mover and diſpoſer of the whole himſelf. For, as we read here, that Jeſus Chriſt is his

Mediator or Inſtrument in *ſalvation*; ſo the elements are his inſtruments in *nature*, and ſo in *ſociety*, the peace and order, the knowledge and morals, the health and comfort of mankind are conducted, under his bleſſing, by various profeſſions; and 'tis the buſineſs of private virtue to ſupport them, and of private benevolence to aſſiſt them in extending good beyond the ordinary courſe of regular appointments.

"BUT is it not a viſible fact, (it may be re-"plied) that every one, in this buſy ſcene, is "principally ſuppoſed to take care of *himſelf?*" True; but, if the Creator has given us *ſelfiſh* inſtincts, he has alſo given us *benevolent* inſtincts, mutual *relations*, and mutual *neceſſities*; which tie us together, almoſt, in an *involuntary* manner; which the ignorant cannot but feel as well as the wiſe, and which, in ſome inſtances, the *wicked themſelves* cannot diſobey? As ſurely as ſelf-love proves the individual, ſo ſurely does *ſympathy* prove that you have *another ſelf*,—a multitude of ſelves—your neighbours—all men with whom you have any intereſt or concern.

"BUT may it not (you'll ſay) be the divine "will, that ſufferers ſhould bear their evils,

"in

" in the ſtrength of *hardy patience*, or periſh " in their deſpair?"—Ah! no: did you not *induſtriouſly* harden yourſelf againſt that tenderneſs of heart, which Chriſt has exemplified and conſecrated, it would teach you otherwiſe: you could not ſee a helpleſs fellow-creature writhing in his pains, and not wiſh to pour the oil of health and comfort into his wounds. Though God is pleaſed to diſcipline man in the ſchool of affliction, he means none to periſh in deſpair. " The poor to periſh, (do you ſay) unpitied, in their deſpair!"—Ah! conſider: why, upon ſome ſudden ſight of woe, does the involuntary tear pour down the iron cheek of obdurate ſelfiſhneſs, why do the bowels of determined apathy relent, with involuntary throws of compunction; if man be not by nature the *friend of man?*

" But human life, you'll ſay, admits not of " the romantic generoſity of going about and " doing good. What man, or body of men, " can ſet up as diſintereſted benefactors, and " traverſe the world gratuitouſly to remove its " calamities?" I anſwer, it is not expected. Our Saviour gives us an example in the *principle*, not the *manner*. As for our manner and meaſure he preſcribes it in his doctrines; which it becomes us now in the next place to obſerve.

IV. THE manner is by *charitable aſſociation.* To the affluent he ſays, *be rich in good works*; to the inferior he ſays, *labour diligently in ſome honeſt vocation that you may have to give to him that needeth*; to all in general he ſays, *let every one of you lay up in ſtore as God has proſpered him for the relief of others*; *bear ye one another's burdens*; *and lay up your treaſures principally in heaven.**

THUS, the Chriſtian idea of charity is, that every one, living virtuouſly according to his ſtation, ſhould deduct ſomething out of his conveniences, and bring it into one common fund for the benefit of diſtreſs; a mode of relief, that at once cements and improves ſociety; hurts none, and benefits all. It takes but little from the more fortunate; and opens a *Betheſda* or *houſe of mercy* for all calamities.

I CALL any charitable inſtitution (eſpecially the inſtitution of Infirmaries) a *Betheſda*; becauſe that ſcripture incident is, as I take it, though no direct proof, yet an inſtructive emblem of goſpel charity. *There was at Jeruſalem* (ſays the ſacred hiſtorian) *by the Sheep-gate,*

* 1 Tim. vi. 18. Eph. iv. 28. 1 Cor. xvi. 2. Gal. vi. 2. Matt. vi. 20.

*a pool,*

*a pool, which in the Hebrew tongue is called Bethesda; having five porches.** It ſhould be rendered a bath. There were many baths, publicly erected in Judea, as in other warm countries of the Eaſt, with *porches* or piazzas for the purpoſes of decency and convenience. The Almighty, to grace that great æra of his providence, the Meſſiah's appearance, was pleaſed to endue the particular one here mentioned, at that particular ſeaſon, with a miraculous power of healing diſeaſes.† Whoſoever ſtepped in firſt was healed; an emblem, this, as I underſtand it, of the narrow polity of the Jews, then expiring, and giving way to the more liberal and univerſal plan of the goſpel. Chriſt then in the courſe of his miniſtry, came there, and found a man, who had languiſhed 38 years under an infirmity, and had no friend to put him into the ſalutary ſtream. Moved with his uſual humanity, he pitied and re-

* John v. 2.

† THE angel did not *viſibly* deſcend into the water, but only there was ſuch a divine effect, as, in the eaſtern way of expreſſion, is ſaid to be wrought by angels, *who* are *miniſtering ſpirits*, and perform the will of God on ſuch occaſions. PEARCE.

lieved him. *Take up thy bed* (he cried) *and walk; and the man became whole.* Now what he did here by miracle, he recommends to all his diſciples. Whenever you ſee a man who has no *friend*, in that moment *humanity* makes *you* his friend.

Look then around you through human life; behold the multitudes around, (as in this pathetic ſtory,) the *impotent, the blind, the halt, the withered, waiting for the moving of the water*—the water of comfort and compaſſion!

See, the miniſters of health, like the *deſcending angel*, ſtand ready to give it its proper virtues! more they cannot do: they owe ſomething to themſelves—they cannot, in ſuch a world as this, wholly give up their own intereſts: others muſt aid them, and bring the poor ſufferers within the reach of their art. Behold, then, the poor ſurrounding objects, in this ſituation, looking towards the fountain of health, with eager, deſiring, impatient eyes; rack'd with pains, and praying for relief; ſtretching out their ſupplicating hands towards their remedy, but alas! unable to attain that bleſſing; helpleſs of themſelves, and wanting a kind hand to aid them and *put them in*; behold

hold them, I ſay, in this forlorn and impotent ſtate, and learn from your Saviour to pity the mournful ſight!

LET, then, every good Chriſtian imitate his Saviour; let every one take his ſufferer to the water of comfort, and all will be well; (i. e.) let every one contribute ſomething in charitable aſſociation with his kind brethren, and univerſal comfort will be the conſequence.

HERE no boſom needs to heave a ſigh, that admits of eaſe; no eye to ſtream with any ſorrow, that admits of conſolation. Here we may indeed imitate our Divine Pattern. Here *our works*, at leaſt, like him, *may go about doing good*; taking in a wide circle of diſtreſs within the ſphere of their beneficent influence! Here we may, like him—(O bleſſed office! delightful employment!) we may give eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, eaſe to the ſick, liberty to the captive, and comfort to the aching mind; and, what is ſtill more; we may give knowledge to the ignorant, diſcipline to the thoughtleſs, and reformation to the profligate! Here the meaneſt contributor may ſay, in his Saviour's gracious accents; "Riſe, hapleſs man, take up thy bed "and walk, go home in peace; return to thy

" former occupation; be a comfort again to
" thyſelf, thy family, and the community;
" go home in peace, and ſin no more; glorify
" God for this merciful deliverance; and pur-
" ſue thy former courſe of uſeful induſtry in
" his fear, with redoubled diligence!"

V. HAVING now, as I hope, ſufficiently conſidered the duty and pleaſure of relieving human diſtreſſes; it becomes us, in the next place, to conſider the goſpel-means of relief in a fuller and diſtincter manner, for our further improvement.

IT beſpeaks its Divine Author in its admirable ſpirit and tendency; ſo wonderfully is it adapted to the nature of man in his *various relations*.

HAVE we ſelf-love? Have we a love of children and relations? Is it natural to provide for ourſelves and them? Is it impoſſible to do this, without the enterpriſe of induſtry, the jealouſy of ſelf-intereſt, the foreſight and parſimony of care? Does the good of the world require theſe things?

YES, the good of the world requires theſe things, and this mode of charity too allows them,

them, and at the ſame time tends to improve and exalt man in all his various relations. It improves him as a ſociable, as a moral, and as a ſpiritual creature. For it requires him in general to exerciſe moderation and ſelf-command, to deduct occaſionally from his uſual eaſe and comfort, to throw ſomething out of his conveniences into one common treaſury of beneficence, and to acquire a taſte and reliſh for moral and intellectual pleaſures.

Now it is certain, the good of the world, though it requires diverſity of orders, yet requires not ſinful exceſſes. Moderation of deſire is beſt for man even in his civil relations. It prevents the outrages that diſtract the world, and encourages the virtues that ſupport it. It provides for ſtations, for families, for private comfort, and for helpleſs neceſſity at the ſame time.

And for the truth of this we may appeal to experience. For, who are they, in the exalted walks of life, who have nothing to ſpare for the poor, by whoſe humble but uſeful labours their eaſe and ſplendor are ſupported? Why, they, who live in all the high indulgence of pampered appetites, who vie with each other

other in all the wanton varieties of luxury, in all the taſtes and pleaſures of a ſenſual life! And who are they, in the lower ranks, who have nothing to ſpare for thoſe *fellow-labourers* of theirs, whoſe lot it is to ſuffer in this life of diſcipline? Why, they, who can go and ſpend the profits of a week's labour in one profligate debauch, and ſquander away their time in liſtleſs idleneſs or waſteful diſſipation! It is *guilt*, you ſee, that brings on their diſability, and hardens their hearts againſt the claims of God and the poor. But you muſt ſee at the ſame time, for the honour of religion; that the ſame guilt (to avenge the cauſe of God and the poor,) corrupts and debaſes them, and renders them bad citizens, and worſe candidates for a bleſſed immortality.

I KNOW there is a common maxim in the world, that luxury is neceſſary to circulate riches, and avarice to accumulate them; in order to keep up the balance of the ſeveral orders. But God *hath no need of the ſinful man:** he can provide for the welfare of his own world in his own way; and his *direct* and *poſitive* will is plain. If he bleſſes you with the ſmiles of a propitious providence, you do but right to fall

* Eccluſ. xv. 12.

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in with the train of events he lays for your riſe; and to apply them to your own benefit with thankful diligence. This may be piouſly conſidered, even as a *divine call to be rich.* But if you can only riſe by *unjuſt* or *uncharitable* means, he will indeed *permit* it as your trial on earth, and divert it to good purpoſes, as the common preſerver of the world, in ſpite of your depravity; you may then, conſequently, riſe in the perverted exerciſe of a free will, which he does not over-rule; but you riſe without his bleſſing, *which alone maketh rich becauſe he addeth no ſorrow with it.** His bleſſing is the natural means of all increaſe; the life, the health, and comfort of all created beings. In ſociety, particularly, the virtuous circulation of wealth is like the regular circulation of the vital fluid in animal bodies: the larger members are fed according to their greater wants, and the meaner *ſuffer no lack*; and herein God's natural bleſſing of health conſiſts. But all defect, and all redundancy is diſeaſe; and tends to diſſolution.

Upon the whole, the goſpel idea of charity is adapted, with exacteſt wiſdom, to the true nature of man. It encourages all his virtuous inſtincts; corrects all his corrupt propenſities.

* Prov. x. 22.

It exerciſes ſelf-love without its narrowneſs; the enterpriſe of induſtry without its rapacity; the prudence of forecaſt without its anxiety; the decency of rank without its inſolence; the love of elegance without its exceſſes; the love of relations without its hoſtility towards others; the love of man without a profane neglect of God;—it trains up man as a ſocial, moral, and ſpiritual creature; prepares him to act his part on the theatre of life with dignity, and to paſs into futurity with virtuous tempers ſuited to the pure and benevolent ſpirits with whom the redeemed of God are to aſſociate in the realms of peace and innocence.

Here, then, our reſolution is ſhort and plain: as we hope to go to heaven when we die; as we hope to face our Divine Maſter with comfort when we come before his awful tribunal; as we hope for the divine bleſſing upon our lawful cares and virtuous pleaſures, while we live; and for a continuance of it upon the inheritances and poſterity we leave behind us; let us copy the example placed before us; let us do good; let us divert our riches from the ſervice of pride and ſenſuality, and make them the inſtruments of beneficence. Let doing good be conſidered as our duty, pleaſure, and employment!

VI. I know

VI. I KNOW not, whether the importunity I have uſed upon this occaſion, requires an apology. The ſubject, I know, is familiar to your ears; and the ſpirit of this flouriſhing town is generally beneficent, and wants little of the preacher's aid. But the purpoſes, I thought, of this anniverſary were not to be neglected. The forms of charity, like the forms of religion, are neceſſary to keep up the ſpirit of it. The very beſt of us want recollection. They, who want no *inſtructor*, yet want a *monitor*. The human heart is apt to cool, the mind to grow inattentive, the beſt known truths to become dormant principles; without ſome ſtated means of bringing them into review.

AVAIL yourſelves, therefore, of this uſeful anniverſary. Encourage it with your uſual zeal and ſpirit of benevolence. Encourage it with that emulation of generous minds, which is *never weary of well-doing*.—You have taken the lead of moſt other places in all laudable inſtitutions. Why ſhould your *Bethesda* want one medical improvement, which this enterpriſing age has found out, or the increaſing exigences of the public require? Why ſhould one ſufferer eye the fountain of health, and want a friendly hand

hand to put him in? Why ſhould one want the beſt mode of relief, which God's miniſters of health, an ingenious and benevolent faculty, are both willing and able to adminiſter with the proper aſſiſtance of their fellow-chriſtians?

I AM told, medicated baths have been found of ſingular uſe in ſome other places; and I ſee the preſent year's report regrets the want of ſome new arrangements for the better accommodation of the crouding objects; the poor, importunate, ſupplicating candidates for admiſſion into your houſe of mercy!

IT is not neceſſary for me, nor indeed does it become me, to dictate to you. If, upon enquiry, you find any thing wanting to perfect your charity, I am ſure, the ingenuity of an enterpriſing commercial people will invent the means, and the liberality of an opulent and generous people will exert them with proper ſpirit and effect. Many, very many, are the ways of making the POOR OUR HEIRS, without hurting ourſelves and nearer relatives!

ALL then that I have to do is to pray, that the Father and Protector of the poor may increaſe

creaſe in your hearts his moſt excellent gift of charity; that he may accept of your oblations, and reward them with his bleſſing!

THE END.

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